

Message Text

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ACTION INR-10

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FM AMEMBASSY AMMAN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 5748

INFO AMCONSUL ALEXANDRIA

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

AMCONSUL JERUSALEM

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

C O N F I D E N T I A L AMMAN 3360

C O R R E C T E D C O P Y (TEXT)

FOR INR/RNA

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PDIP, PLO, JO

SUBJECT: PALESTINIAN REPRESENTATION IN JORDAN

REF: STATE 091578

1. PALESTINIAN REPRESENTATION IN JORDAN IS RESTRICTED
TO (A) A SMALL PLO OFFICE IN AMMAN AND (B) A CONTINGENT
OF THE PALESTINIAN LIBERATION ARMY (PLA).

A. PLO HAS BEEN REPRESENTED IN JORDAN SINCE PLO'S
INCEPTION IN 1964. UNTIL 1967, JORDAN'S PLO OFFICE
WAS LOCATED IN JERUSALEM; IT MOVED TO AMMAN IN 1967
WHEN JORDAN LOST THE WEST BANK TO ISRAEL. THE OFFICE
IS STAFFED BY ABOUT TEN PEOPLE AND IS NOMINALLY RESPONSIBLE
FOR ASSISTANCE TO NEEDY PALESTINIANS, IN PARTICULAR
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THOSE EXILED BY ISRAELI AUTHORITIES FROM THE WEST BANK.
ONE STAFF MEMBER, COL. SHUKRW, HAS RESPONSIBILITY
FOR PLO'S MILITARY AFFAIRS. BECAUSE OF THE PLO/PLA-
JORDAN SPLIT MENTIONED BELOW, SHUKRI HHB NO CONTACT
WITH THE PLA-JORDAN.

THE PLO OFFICE IS IN FACT ALMOST COMPLETELY
INEFFECTIVE; ITS POLITICAL ACTIVITIES ARE

SO CLOSELY CONTROLLED BY THE JORDANIAN GOVERNMENT AS TO BE INCONSEQUENTIAL. ANY MILITARY OR QUASI-MILITARY ACTIVITIES ARE FORBIDDEN OUTRIGHT. ITS DIRECTOR, ABD AR-RAHMAN ABU JABARA (ABU MUSA OR ABU LATIIF), IS REPORTEDLY LETHARGIC AND UNIFORMED, AND ITS BUDGET SO SMALL THAT MOST REQUESTS FOR FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE FROM PALESTINIANS IN NEED ARE PERFORCE TURNED DOWN. JORDAN OFFICIALLY RECOGNIZES THE PLO, AND ACCEPTS IT AS THE SOLE LEGITIMATE REPRESENTATIVE OF THE PALESTINIAN PEOPLE AS A RESULT OF THE 1974 RABAT SUMMIT, BUT ITS REPRESENTATIVES IN JORDAN ENJOY, IN EFFECT, NO OFFICIAL STATUS HERE.

B. THE PALESTINIAN LIBERATION ARMY (PLA) HAS POSTED THE ZAYD BIN HURAYTHAH BATTALION IN JORDAN. ITS LEADER, BRIG. NIHAD NUSAYBAH, HAS BEEN ON BAD TERMS WITH PLO LEADERSHIP EVER SINCE PLO TAKEOVER ATTEMPT IN JORDAN IN 1970 WHICH HE OPPOSED. GEN. NUSAYBAH AND HIS 350-500 MAN FORCE, ALTHOUGH NOMINALLY UNDER THE COMMAND OF THE PLA HEADQUARTERS COMMANDER IN DAMASCUS, ARE IN FACT COMPLETELY CONTROLLED BY THE GOJ AND INDEED ARE CONSIDERED LOYAL TO KING HUSSEIN. THEIR SALARIES ARE PAID BY THE GOJ ON THE SAME WAGE SCALE AS THAT OF JORDAN'S ARMED FORCES.

2. JORDAN DOES NOT RECOGNIZE ANY OF THE PLO'S
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COMPONENT ELEMENTS AND NONE ARE OFFICIALLY REPRESENTED IN THE COUNTRY. HOWEVER, INDIVIDUAL MEMBERS OF THE PFLP, PDFLP, SA'IQA, FATAH, ALF, ETC. ARE PERMITTED TO LIVE IN JORDAN, BUT ARE KEPT UNDER CLOSE WATCH BY JORDANIAN SECURITY AUTHORITIES TO PREVENT THEIR UNDERTAKING ANY ANTI-REGIME ACTIVITY. SEVERAL PDFLP MEMBERS WERE AMONG THOSE ACTIVE IN THE MARCH 20-22 DEMONSTRATIONS IN SOME OF JORDAN'S PALESTINIAN REFUGEE CAMPS.

3. THE PLA AND PLO REPRESENTATIVES IN JORDAN ENJOY NO DIPLOMATIC PRIVILEGES OR IMMUNITIES AND ARE NOT LISTED IN GOJ FOREIGN MINISTRY DIPLOMATIC LIST OF FOREIGN MISSIONS IN JORDAN. HOWEVER, SHOULD A PLO REPRESENTATIVE BE IMPLICATED IN CRIMINAL ACTIVITY, THE GOJ, TO AVOID THE INEVITABLE OUTCRY FROM ITS ARAB BROTHERS, WOULD PROBABLY ELECT THE MORE POLITICALLY EXPEDIENT OPTION AND EXPEL THE OFFENDER RATHER THAN BRING CHARGES. THE GOJ RETAINS THE RIGHT TO APPROVE THE ASSIGNMENT OF THE PLO OFFICE DIRECTOR AND ALL OTHER STAFF MEMBERS UNDER HIS SUPERVISION.
PICKERING

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